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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/910,720	07/24/2001	James P. Hearn	8932-177	1799

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EXAMINER

RAMANA, ANURADHA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3732

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/910,720	HEARN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Anu Ramana	3732	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 5-16, 27, 29-39, 41, 43-46, 49-54, 58, 59, 64, 65, 67, 72, 73, 76, 78-87 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 5-16, 27, 29-39, 41, 43-46, 49-54, 58, 59, 64, 65, 67, 72, 73, 76 and 78-87 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 7/24/01 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

The finality of the last action is being withdrawn in view of the new rejections made in this office action.

Claim Objections

Claims 81-84 are objected to because they depend on canceled claim 75. For examination purposes, these claims have been assumed to depend on claim 11. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 1, 27, 29, 31, 35-39, 41, 43, 50, 51, 54, 58, 65 and 86-87 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bremer et al. (US 6,022,351).

Bremer et al. disclose a fastener or "cranial flap clamp" including: a first clamping member 12; a second clamping member 11 having an opening 25 with teeth "forming a cutting surface"; and a shank or extension member 13 having a weakened section or stop 23 (Figs. 1, 3 and 5, col. 3, lines 61-65, col. 4, col. 5, lines 1-10). Regarding the limitation, "forming a cutting surface," the Examiner notes that any surface can function as a cutting surface. Regarding the limitation, "substantially smooth," Bremer et al. disclose that teeth need only be provided on sufficient portions of the surfaces 18, 19 of the extension member and need not cover a majority of the shank or extension member 13 (col. 2, lines 40-51 and col. 4, lines 27-32). Thus, the extension member 13 is held to be substantially smooth.

Regarding claim 54, the extension member has teeth or "flares" (Fig. 4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 44 and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bremer et al. (US 6,022,351), as applied to claims 1 and 27.

Bremer et al. disclose all elements of the claimed invention except for fastener holes in the second clamping member.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided fastener holes in the second clamping member for securing the second clamping member since it is well known in the art to utilize fasteners for the purpose of securing a member to a surface.

Further, Applicant has not disclosed that providing fastener holes in the second clamping member solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose. Accordingly, provision of fastener holes in the second clamping member is deemed to be a design consideration that fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Bremer et al.

Claims 2, 5, 8-16, 30-32, 34, 45-46, 49, 59, 67, 72-73, 76 and 78-85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bremer et al. (US 6,022,351), as applied to claims 11 and 27, further in view of Herrington et al. (US 6,379,363).

Bremer et al. disclose all elements of the claimed invention except: (1) for an extension member that is a tube; (2) an opening having a circular shape; (3) a head disposed on the extension member proximate the first clamping member; (4) radial

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cutouts on the second clamping member; and (5) a fastener hole in the second clamping member.

Herrington et al. teach a cranial clamp having a first clamping member 12, a head 30 disposed proximate first clamping member with a bore, an extension member or tube 16 placed in the bore of head 30, a second clamping member 14, a circular opening 59 to receive the extension member, radial cutouts on the second clamping member forming protrusions 52 and an integrally formed stop member or crimp or ridge or twisted portion or flared portion 34 which limits the movement of clamping member 14 on extension member 16 (Figures 1 and 21e, col. 4, lines 12-58).

Regarding claims 2, 11, 30 and 59, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided radial cutouts in the second clamping member of Bremer et al., as taught by Herrington et al., to rigidly retain the second clamping member against the cranial flap and skull.

Regarding claims 5, 8-9 and 31-34, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided an extension member in the form of a tube received in a bore of a head proximate first clamping member wherein the extension member is received in a circular opening in the second clamping member, as taught by Herrington et al., since it was known in the art to provide an extension member in the form of a tube wherein the extension member is received in a circular opening in the second clamping member.

Regarding claims 16 and 72, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided fastener holes in the second clamping member for securing the second clamping member since it is well known in the art to utilize fasteners for the purpose of securing a member to a surface.

Further, Applicant has not disclosed that providing fastener holes in the second clamping member solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose. Accordingly, provision of fastener holes in the second clamping member is deemed to be a design consideration that fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art of Bremer et al. and Herrington et al.

Claim 33, 52 and 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bremer et al. (US 6,022,351), as applied to claim 27, further in view of Lerch (US 5,800,436).

Bremer et al. disclose all elements of the claimed invention except for: (1) an extension member slidably attached to the first clamping member; and (2) a head disposed on the extension member proximate the first clamping member.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have formed the extension member 13 separate from first clamping member 12, since it has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179.

Lerch teaches a clamp with an extension member slidably receiving a first clamping member wherein a head 111 is disposed on the extension member proximate the first clamping member to prevent the first clamping member from sliding off the extension member (Figs. 1, 4 and 7, col. 2, lines 50-64 and col. 3, lines 1-13).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided a head 111 on the extension member of the Bremer et al. device, to prevent the first clamping member from sliding off the extension member, as taught by Lerch.

Claim 6, 7 and 78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bremer et al. (US 6,022,351) and Herrington et al. (US 6,379,363), as applied to claims 5 and 11, further in view of Lerch (US 5,800,436).

The combination of Bremer et al. and Herrington et al. discloses all elements of the claimed invention except for: (1) an extension member slidably attached to the first clamping member; and (2) a head disposed on the extension member proximate the first clamping member.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have formed the extension member 13 separate from first clamping member 12, since it has been held that constructing a formerly integral

structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art. *Nerwin v. Erlichman*, 168 USPQ 177, 179.

Lerch teaches a clamp with an extension member slidably receiving a first clamping member wherein a head 111 is disposed on the extension member proximate the first clamping member to prevent the first clamping member from sliding off the extension member (Figs. 1, 4 and 7, col. 2, lines 50-64 and col. 3, lines 1-13).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided a head 111 on the extension member of the device of the combination of Bremer et al. and Herrington et al., to prevent the first clamping member from sliding off the extension member, as taught by Lerch.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 1-2, 5-10, 14, 27, 29-39, 41, 43-46, 49-54, 58-59, 64-65, 67, 72-73, 78-80, 86 and 87 is withdrawn in view of the rejections made in this office action. The Examiner sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience caused to the Applicants by this action.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anu Ramana whose telephone number is (571) 272-4718. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AR *Amudha Ramana*
August 5, 2005


EDUARDO C. ROBERT
PRIMARY EXAMINER